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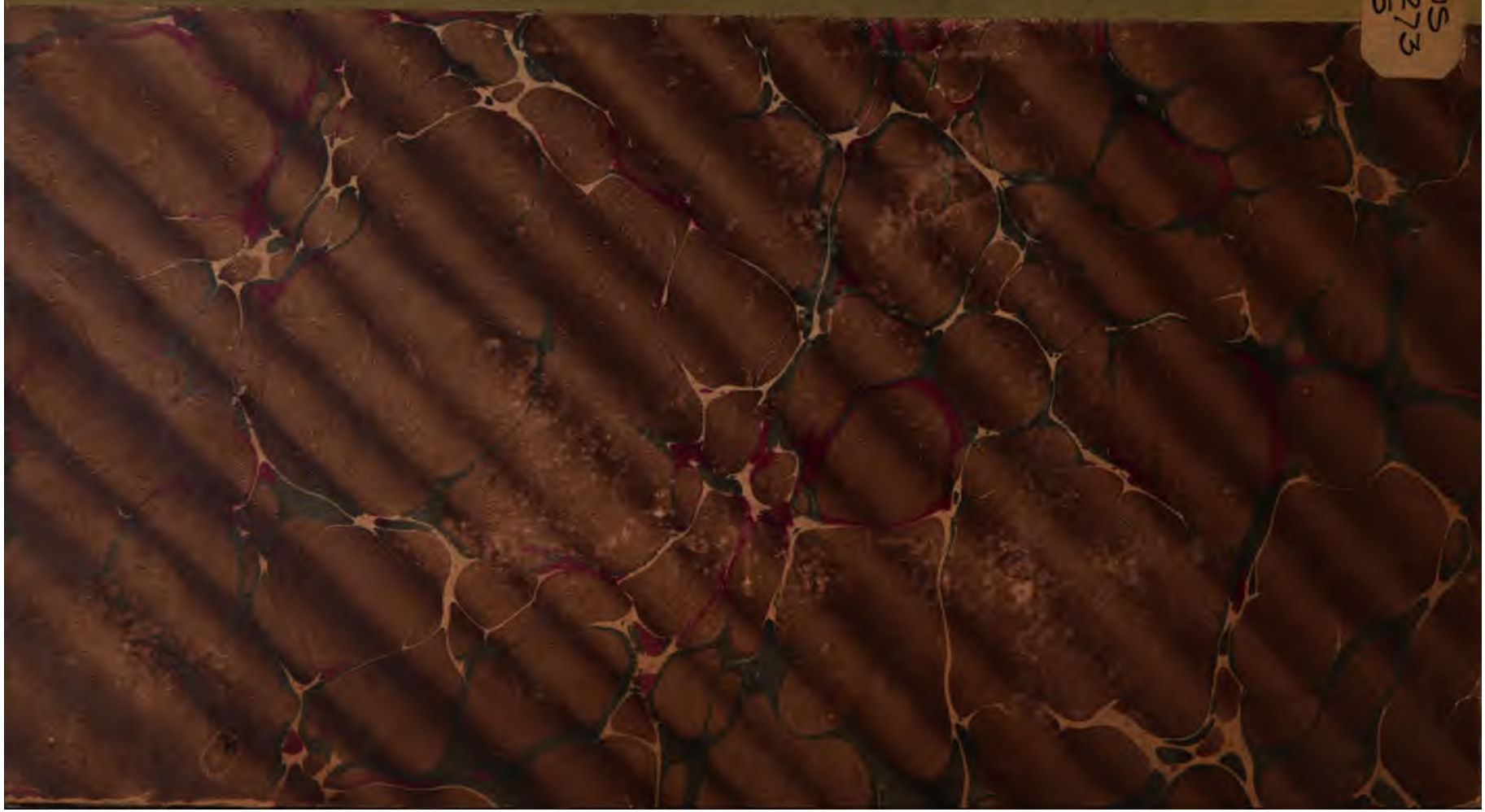

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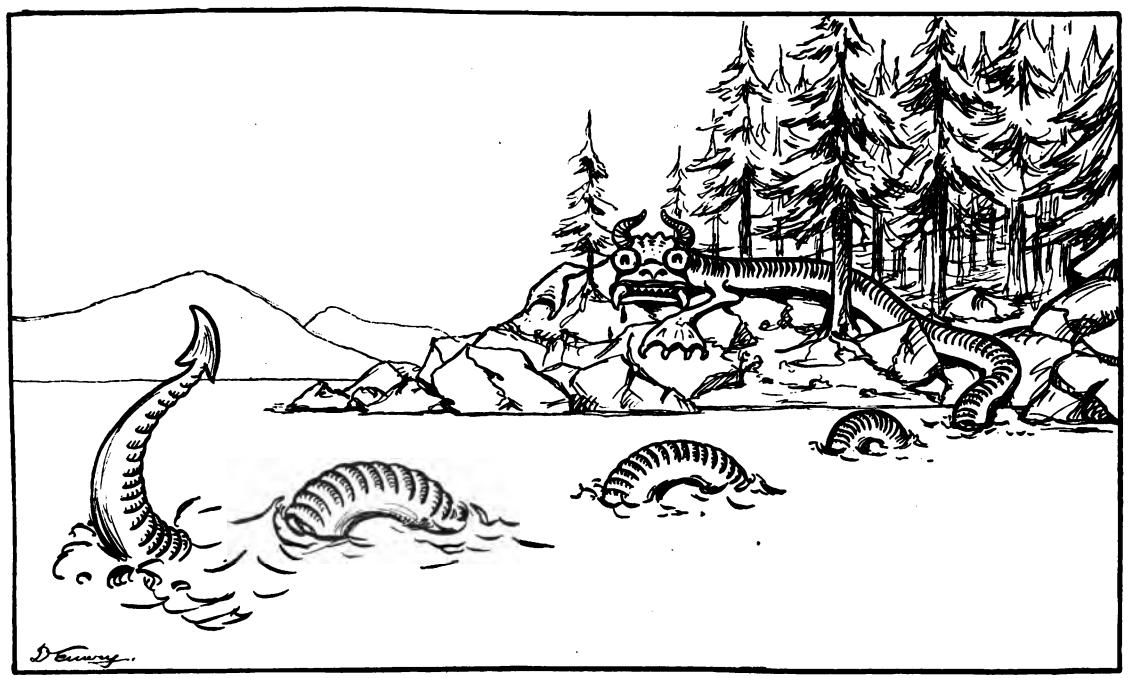
URIAH JEWETT
AND THE SEA SERPENT
OF
LAKE MEMPHEMAGOG

FROM NOTES LEFT BY THE LATE GEORGE C. MERRILL
WHO WAS PURSER ON THE MOUNTAIN MAID IN
URIAH'S TIME

CITY OF NEWPORT, VERMONT
1917



THE SEA SERPENT OF LAKE MEMPHREMAGOG AT COVE ISLAND. OWL'S HEAD AND MOUNT ELEPHANTIS IN THE DISTANCE.

URIAH JEWETT
AND THE SEA SERPENT
OF
LAKE MEMPHEMAGOG

FROM NOTES LEFT BY THE LATE GEORGE C. MERRILL WHO WAS PURSER ON THE MOUNTAIN MAID IN URIAH'S TIME.

CITY OF NEWPORT, VERMONT
1917

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DEDICATION.

This volume is most cordially dedicated to THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT who visited the Eastern Townships and the United States in 1869 and 1870; and caused His Poor Mother some unpleasant memories by the ardency of his youth, and who left the imprints of his visit on the shores of Lake Memphremagog.

PREFACE.

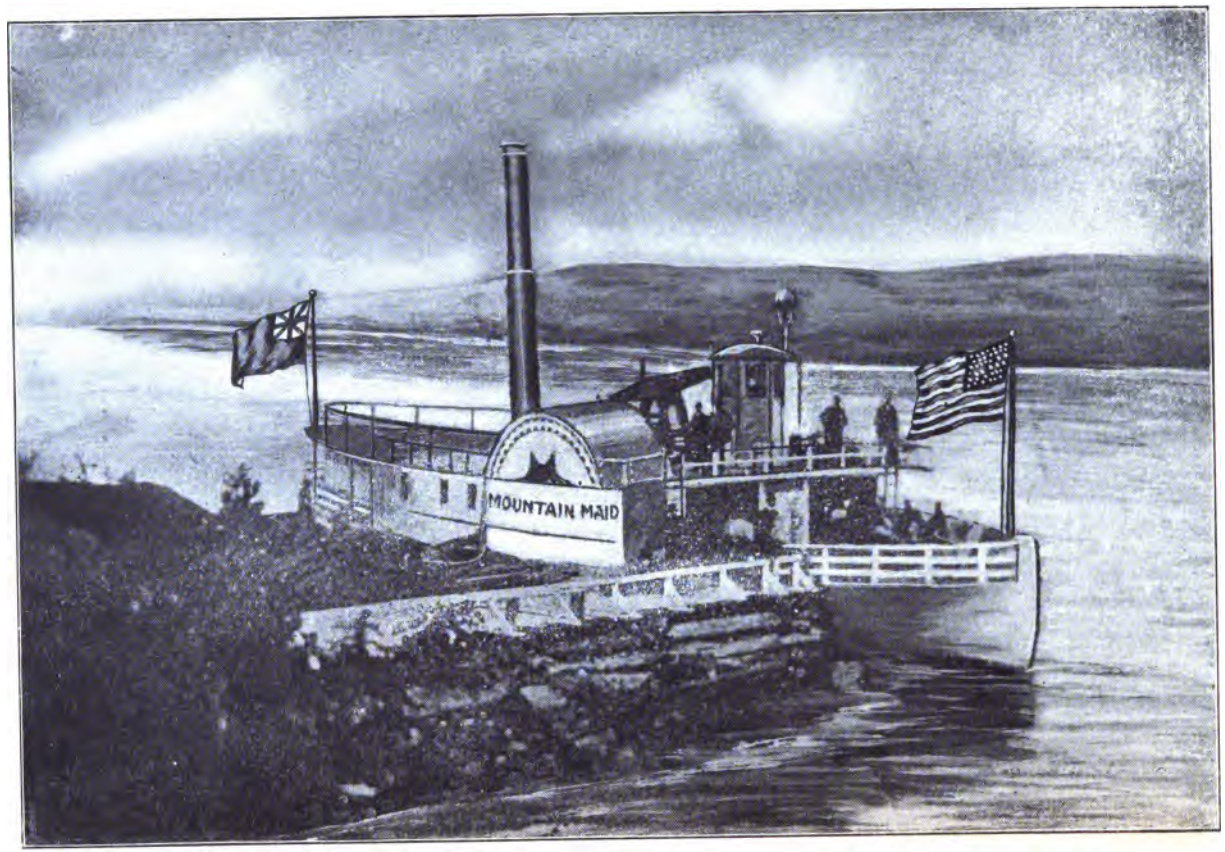
Uriah Jewett and his Sea Serpent Story of Lake Memphremagog so famous sixty years ago has now almost become ledgendary and many do not believe that Uriah Jewett was ever a living personage on the shores of that beautiful lake. But the note book of George C. Merrill who was purser on the steamer Mountain Maid at one time, will show that Uriah Jewett was not only made of human flesh and blood, but was a poet of the Province of Quebec. As to the sea serpent we shall leave the matter to the reader and our artist who is represented to us, as a man of great note, research and ability. He comes

to us very highly recommended. He was a member "of the 3d Ambulance Company of the New York National Guard." When on duty on the Mexican border in 1916 and 1917 he was "Art Editor of the *Rio Grand Rattler*,"* which especially qualified him as the artist best fitted to properly delineate this serpent of Lake Memphremagog.

We learn that Uriah Jewett was from New Hampshire, and was an old-time schoolmaster in that state. There in those days they estimated a man's qualifications for teaching school by his ability to wield a beech

*A magazine issued by the army on a traveling press.

withe. The town superintendent of schools always examined the candidates for teachers in *beech*-letics.



MOUNTAIN MAID AS FIRST APPEARED.

SKETCH OF URIAH JEWETT OF LAKE MEMPHREMAGOG FROM THE MANUSCRIPT NOTE-BOOK OF GEORGE C. MERRILL.

Uriah Jewett hailed from New Hampshire about the middle of the nineteenth century. He settled on the eastern shore of Lake Memphremagog, about one and one-half miles north of the summer residence of Sir Hugh Allen. There is a point of land extending westward into the lake from his farm which is known and called, to this day, as Jewett's Point.

Jewett was a farmer; never married; his appearance was rather rus-

tic, and his clothes showed a want of female care; there were no creases in his pants. He was a very honest and upright man.

Jewett had a great dislike of J. B. Hoyt who kept the Mountain House at the foot of Owl's Head, and bought poultry and other farm productions of him and never paid him. After Hoyt's departure from the Lake, Jewett commemorated the event in a poetical effusion which probably will survive as long as the English language is spoken on the shores of the lake, and long after Canada has become a free and independent nation, with a constitutional government, with dying memories of lords and lordships. Hoyt hailed from New

Hampshire. Capt. George W. Fogg married his sister. Hoyt and Capt. Fogg, built the first mountain house in the bay at the foot of Owl's Head in 1850. It was burnt in 1854. Another mountain house much larger was built near the site of the old one in 1855, by J. B. Hoyt and Miles E. Knowlton. This one changed owners several times, and had several additions built on to it. It was burnt on October 11, 1899.

In September, 1856 Hoyt left Lake Memphremagog in the night. His coat and hat, and boat were found floating near the shore the next day. It was supposed that he was drowned; the lake was dragged three weeks or more for the body, by Capt. Fogg;

and three hundred residents of the vicinity assisted in searching for the body. The body was not discovered. A coffin was got in readiness, but was never used for Hoyt; and it was stored in an old ash house on the Point at Georgeville for a long time. For several years after this event the coffin was used for the storage of beans. About eight years afterwards John Diamond was drowned off Black Point and when his body was found the beans were taken out and the body was put in their place and was buried.

Hoyt turned up in Minnesota several years afterwards. He enlisted in a Minnesota regiment early in the Rebellion and was promoted for his

bravery from one engagement to another, till he was appointed colonel of his regiment. He was a very dark skined man and could be easily mistaken for an Indian.

Jewett was a crank on the sea serpent; he was watching the shores of the lake all the time for its trails in the sand. He imagined he saw where he had eaten some fish and a turtle on the beach. He set many culheaghs along the shore of the lake to capture the animal, but never succeeded in catching him, however he had found his culheaghs sprung in the morning and the bait gone. He baited those culheaghs with the bodies of lambs, calves, pigs and poultry.

The sea serpent was never traced further south than Cove island.

Jewett had a theory that the serpent came to Lake Memphremagog through a subterranean channel under Owl's Head, from the Atlantic ocean and could never find its way back to the ocean through this channel.

JEWETT'S SATIRE ON HOYT'S DEPARTURE FROM OWL'S HEAD MOUNTAIN HOUSE, TOWNSHIP OF POTTON, CANADA EAST.

For fame and dear freedom I left my native home,
I went straight to Canada, Owl's head for to roam.

The scenery is romantic, picturesque and fine;
The people in Canada were all very kind.

They trusted me with money, two thousand or more,
I thanked them very kindly and laid it up in store.

I bought a yoke of oxen of Jewett by name;
It was well contrived, a pusillanamous game;

Eighty-five dollars was the face of the note,
I quickly robbed his pocket and away I did tote;

The farmers of the townships were all very good,
They trusted with poultry and everything for food.

They trusted me for mutton and both butter and cheese,
My house filled with company as full as you please.

We all dined together; it was on a fair day,
They paid me their money and by steam went away.

The thoughts of that money it ran through my head,
I laid a deep scheme that they might call me dead.

By the side of Lake Magog I fired the big gun,
I bid them good-night and away I did run.

I had a fine dive, I caught the serpent by the tail,
My speed was like lightning or the sword fish in the gale.

My passage was under subteranean cliffs,
And I popped up in Minnesota with money enough.

Captain Fogg with his men, they were very kind,
They grappled the lake but no Hoyt could they find.

They laid up my coffin in a very safe place,
By the side of Lake Magog and in an old ash-house.

Now my coffin is awaiting my speedy return,
St. Anthony's Falls is where I sojourn.

So I must be quick and dexterous in my way,
For old Cuty stand a calling and I must obey.

The Indians invite me to stay here with them,
My complexion well favors both the squaws and their men.

So here with the Indians I still will remain,
And live in Minnesota till old Cuty calls again.

N. B.—When old Cuty calls again J. B. H, has got to heave to. (Signed) U. Jewett.

The above poem was composed by Uriah Jewett in 1856 on the character, escape and supposed drowning of J. B. Hoyt of Owl's Head fame. Jewett had suffered financially by Hoyt's unsuccessful transactions in business and he took this way to defame him.

Among Mr. Merrill's papers on an envelope containing this effusion was written the following memorandum: "Composed by Uriah Jewett of Georgeville in 1856, for Geo. S. Ayer, who was in St. Anthony Falls, Minn., at that time and who was swindled and drove out of Canada by George Brown, architect of Montreal, and Alex. Molson of Lake Memphremagog, P. Q., 1866."

MEMBERS OF THE ENGLISH ROYAL FAMILY VISITS IN THE CANADAS AND THE UNITED STATES.

According to Mr. Merrill's note book, Prince Arthur, now Duke of Connaught, visited the Canadas and the United States in 1869 and 1870. When he visited the valley of Memphremagog lake, he was royally entertained several days at the summer residence of Sir Hugh Allen, located on the eastern shore. He occasionally came up the lake on Sir Hugh's yacht with the family and stopped at the Memphremagog House.

The Hon. John G. Foster, United States Consul General at Ottawa, Canada, on March 12, 1917, writes: "that His Royal Highness, Prince Arthur came to Canada late in the Autumn of 1869, and returned to England about August, 1870. It is probable that he visited Lake Memphremagog some time in June or July of 1870, but the exact date I am unable to give."

In 1872 when Uriah Jewett was following the deeply furrowed trails of the sea serpent in the shifting sands of the Memphremagog beaches, the news swiftly spread through the Eastern Townships that a Prince of the English Royal Family, *The Duke of Owl's Head*, was that morn-

ing born in the densely tangled forests of Canada. This stain upon the escutchion of the Royal Household sorely grieved the young Prince's grandmother and she deplored the uncontrolled ardency of her son's youthful indescretion. But little attention was paid to this child of the Canadian forest by the members of the Royal Family and they did not speak of this stain upon their escutchion among their neighbors. The Duke of Owl's Head lived to be nearly fifty years of age. His death occurred only a few years ago and was somewhat tragic and obscure, but no one seemed to care to investigate the cause of it, or the circumstances connected therewith.

Soon after the birth of this young DUKE OF OWL'S HEAD, the Order of Knighthood was conferred upon his maternal grandfather by Queen Victoria.

According to Mr. Merrill's *Note Book*, "Victoria was a very nice girl and married a young German. His privileges were somewhat curtailed: he was not allowed to meddle with British politics, but was imported and kept wholly for breeding purposes. Her girls were nicely brought up. They were taught to be industrious and frugal and to keep good company. But she had little control over her boys. They were brought up in idleness and luxury,

and were continually getting into mischief."

PLATE TWO shows the steamer Mountain Maid as it first appeared on Lake Memphremagog. This plate was made from a photograph in the possession of Mrs. John M. Cunningham the adopted daughter of Captain George W. Fogg, who kindly loaned it to the author for insertion in this work.

Price List of Historical and Genealogical Works, for Sale by John M. Currier, M. D., Newport, Vt.

Orleans County Historical Society Publications.

Archives of Science and Transactions of the Orleans County Historical Society. 1870-1874. 8vo. Paper. pp. 256. Price $2.50.

Proceedings, 1887 to November 1889; paper cover, 89 pages. This volume contains Judge Stewart's history of the kidnapping of Charles Allen Thorndike Rice in 1860, with an account of his hiding with his mother, from his father and his detective police, in the town of Derby; and of their successful escape to Europe after about one month's wonderful and almost unendurable hardships. This boy was fitted for college, and graduated at Oxford; after which he returned to America and was editor and proprietor of the North American Review. Only a few copies issued. Price $2.00.

Proceedings from November, 1889, to January, 1890, paper cover, 62 pages; out of print.

Proceedings from August, 1890, to September, 1891, paper cover, 30 pages. Price 50 cents

Proceedings August 27, 1892, paper cover, 20 pages. Price 50 cents.

Proceedings, 1902-3, paper cover, plate, 25 pages. Price 50 cents.

Proceedings, 1904-5-6, paper cover, plate, 36 pages. Price 50 cents.

Proceedings, 1907-8, paper cover, 46 pages. Price 50 cents.

Proceedings, 1909-10, paper cover, 92 pages; several full-page illustrations; devoted largely to the centennial celebration of Runaway Pond of Glover, Vt. Besides the Centennial Address of the Hon. F. W. Baldwin, it contains the Semi-centennial Address of the Rev. Pliny H. White. Price $1.00.

Proceedings, 1911-12, printed on extra fine paper. Contents: Report of the annual meeting August, 1911; further account, by His Excellency, Ex-Gov. Josiah Grout, of the kidnapping of Charles Allen Thorndike Rice in 1860, and of the unsuccessful search for the boy in Derby, Vt., by the father and his skilled detectives; Account of the centennial celebration of the town of Lowell, Vt., July 4, 1912, including the unveiling of a marker on the Hazen Road; and Report of the Annual Meeting of the Historical Society in August, 1912. Illustrated. Limited edition. Price $1.00.

Annis Genealogy. By John McNab Currier, M. D. 8vo. Paper. 74 pages. 1909. Price $2.00. Only 250 copies is-This work gives the first three generations of the Annis family in America, and will be found useful in tracing the Family history of any one bearing that name. The descendants of David Annis of Bath, N. H., who died in that town August 18, 1824, are brought down, quite extensively, to the present time (1909)

Genealogy of Richard Currier of Salisbury and Amesbury, Mass., in 1640, including the first three generations and several lines of his descendants down to the present time (1910). By Harvey L. Currier. Also Ezra Currier of Bath, N. H., and his descendants down to the present time (1910), by John M. Currier. Illustrated. Uncut. Price, bound in stiff covers, $4.50; postage 10 cents.

Publications of the Rutland Co. Historical Society.

Proceedings of the Rutland County Historical Society, Vol. 1, 1881, 8vo. Paper. pp. 191. Price $2.00.

Proceedings of the Rutland County Historical Society. Vol. 2. From 1882 to 1887. Paper. Containing vast amount of local history. Price $2.00.

Log Book of Timothy Boardman kept on board a privateer in 1778. Also biographical sketch of the author. Albany, 1885, 4to. pp. 88. Paper. After Mr. Boardman left privateering he settled in Rutland County, Vermont, where he spent the remainder of his life. Price $3.00.

Memorial Exercises in Castleton, Vt., in 1885. Contains vast amount of historical matter by various old soldiers. pp. 66. Paper. Contains also a letter written by Fred Grant, dictated by his father just before his death. Price .75

History of the Christening of the Island of Neshobe in Lake Bombazon, by the Rutland County Historical Society, July 4, 1881. Compiled by John M. Currier, M. D., Secretary. It is rare to find more local history crowded into 49 pagea than in this rare book. Only a few copies were issued, and was never advertised. Paper. pp. 49. Price $1.00

Miscellaneous.

Red-Book of Neshobe, pp. 16 Violet Book of Neshobe, pp. 24. Orange-Book of Neshobe, pp. 12. Blue-Book of Neshobe, pp. 12. Printed in colored inks. By the Owls of Neshobe Island, and Eagles of Cedar Mountain, Castleton, Vt. These books were issued to familiarize the name of Neshobe on the Island in Lake Bombazon. Price $1.50.

Song of Hubbardton Raid. This gives an account of the raid of the citizens of Hubbardton, Vt., on Castleton Medical College for the recovery of the stolen body of Mrs. Churchill, 1880, pp. 36. Paper. Price 50 cents.

History of Bird's Mountain Masonic Monument 2500 Feet Above the Level of the Sea. Compiled by John M. Currier, M. D. Paper, pp. 82. Albany, N. Y., 1887. Plate. Uncut. Only one copy issued for each brick in the monument. This monument was struck by lightning and injured a few years after its erection. This was a unique structure. Price $1.00.

How Neshobe Came Up Into The Green Mountains. Also the Discovery of Lake Bombazon by Samuel de Champlain. Compiled by John McNab Currier, M. D., 1914, Newport, Vt. Only 75 copies issued. Price $1.00.

The New, New England Primer, By a citizen of Lake Bridge, Vermont, 1913. Paper. 25 pages. Newport, Vermont. This work was written to show, in a small compass, the true position of the Agnostic in religion and philosophy. The true Agnostic is not an Atheist, an Infidel, nor a Religionist, but a patient waiter for the evidences to establish either claimants' asserted views. Price $1.00.

Illustrated History of the Log Bridge Across Lake Memphremagog at "The Narrows." By John McNab Currier, M. D., 1917. Price 50 cents.

Uriah Jewett and the Sea Serpent in Lake Memphremagog. Compiled from the notes left by the late George C. Merrill, many years purser on the "Mountain Maid." Price 75 cents.

Illustrated History of the Memphremagog House, from its Axe-Hewn Frame in 1838, to its Destruction by Fire, May 15, 1907. By John McNab Currier, M. D., Newport, Vermont. Pages 15. 6 Plates. Only 25 copies issued. Price $1.75.

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